

completely around the room. In the centre are two benches, at the end of which rests, on a high box, a huge iron kettle containing a very insipid sample of home-made berry wine. We are politely accommodated with seats among the chiefs at one end of the room, while the women and children fill up the other. Directly as the men and boys occupy the side benches, blind chief Gibson (the famous Lacrosse maker), rises to announce the names of the singers and drummer for the opening dance. Twelve young men take possession of the centre benches, and facing each other they lean

tapped with a stick it produces a very peculiar sound.

At the beating of the drum as a signal, the singers break into a wild and weird chant; around them a procession of dancers move in single file, making a circuit of the room; with their heads inclined forward they keep time with the rattles by jerking the forearm up and down. The step—if I might define it as such—is decidedly an odd one; it altogether differs from the half-trot that generally characterizes the dances of the western Indians. There is nothing graceful about it; evidently all the rigidity that can be



The Onondaga Long House.

forward with elbows resting on their knees; each holds in his right hand a rattle, which is fashioned from a section of cow's horn, half filled with dried peas and fastened to a handle about ten inches long.

Opposite the wine kettle, and facing it, sits an old wrinkled and long-haired chief, who leads in the singing; he is holding by his left hand a small drum about eight inches in diameter, made of thin layers of the inner skin of hard-wood bark glued together; the bottom is water tight, the top being covered with sheep skin; about half an inch of hot water is poured into the cylinder, the vapor of which causes the skin to moisten slightly, so that when

displayed is the perfection which every dancer strives to attain. The figure performed is not unlike the "Tablet Dance" held annually by the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, but in the step there is no resemblance.

With a rigid body they take a very short stiff-kneed jump, leaving the ground with the heel and toe at the same instant, and lighting squarely on the foot; then, with a double rocking motion of the feet, and turning in and out of the toes, they jump again.

One half of the circle is composed of men, the other of women, the ages of both sexes ranging from eighteen upwards.